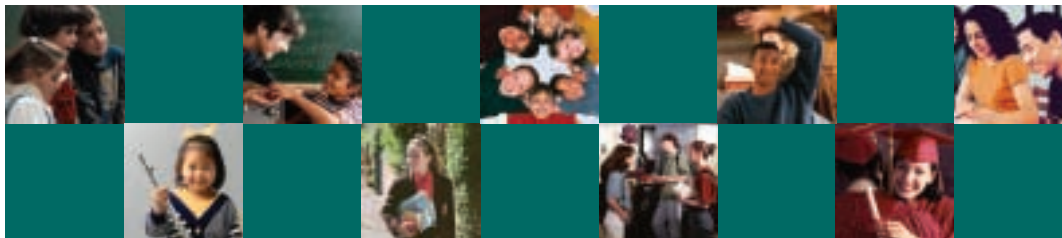


# the condition of education 2002



## INDICATOR 38

### Student Participation in Distance Education

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2002*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2002*, visit the NCES web site (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002025>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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## NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

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U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Educational Research and Improvement



# Learning Opportunities

## Student Participation in Distance Education

*Despite the proliferation of distance education offerings, fewer than one in 10 undergraduates enroll in these classes.*

Enrollments, course offerings, and availability of distance education increased rapidly during the 1990s. The percentage of 2- and 4-year institutions offering distance education classes rose from 33 to 44 percent between fall 1995 and 1997, and the number of such classes nearly doubled (NCES 2000–013). One-fifth of the nation’s 2- and 4-year institutions also planned to start offering distance education courses between 1998 and 2001.

Despite the expansion of distance education offerings, 8 percent of undergraduates and 12 percent of master’s students enrolled in such classes at postsecondary institutions in 1999–2000. A higher percentage of students at public 2-year colleges than at 4-year institutions participated in distance education classes (9 versus 7 percent). Of the undergraduates who participated, more used the Internet (60 percent) than live audio or television (37 percent) or prerecorded audio or television (39 percent). Similarly, more master’s students who participated in distance education classes used the Internet than live or prerecorded audio or television (68 percent versus 45 and 29 percent,

respectively). Among students who participated in distance education classes, master’s students were more likely than undergraduates to report that their entire program was available through distance education. Finally, among students who participated, a higher proportion of both undergraduate and master’s students were less satisfied than more satisfied with the quality of instruction they received in their distance education classes compared with their regular classes (see supplemental tables 38-1 and 38-2).

Among undergraduates, females (9 percent) were more likely than males (7 percent) to participate in distance education, as were students over age 24 than younger students and students who worked part time than students who worked full time (although some of these characteristics may be interrelated). Undergraduates who considered themselves “employees who study” were more likely to participate than students who considered themselves either “students who work” or “students who do not work” (see supplemental table 38-1).

DISTANCE EDUCATION PARTICIPATION: Percentage of undergraduates who participated in distance education classes at postsecondary institutions, and percentage of participants with various experiences with distance education: 1999–2000					
Distance education characteristics	Total	2-year public	4-year		
			Total	Public	Private not-for-profit
Total percentage participating <sup>1</sup>	7.6	9.0	6.6	6.9	6.1
Percentage of participants <sup>2</sup>					
Type of distance education <sup>3</sup>					
Live TV/audio	37.3	39.3	34.1	36.6	27.5
Prerecorded audio/TV	39.3	43.8	33.2	31.5	37.7
Internet	60.1	56.4	64.3	61.6	71.5
Entire program available through distance education	29.0	28.8	27.8	27.1	29.8
Level of satisfaction with distance education classes compared with regular classes					
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
More satisfied	22.6	24.0	19.9	20.2	19.1
Equally satisfied	47.1	45.1	51.2	51.1	51.6
Less satisfied	29.6	30.0	28.2	28.2	28.1

<sup>1</sup>Denominator is total undergraduate population.

<sup>2</sup>The denominator in the rows below is the number of undergraduate students who participated in distance education classes.

<sup>3</sup>Type of distance education categories are not mutually exclusive.

NOTE: Includes students who participated in distance education at either the institution at which they were enrolled or both the institution at which they were enrolled and another institution. Students who participated in distance education only at an institution other than the one at which they were primarily enrolled were excluded. Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:2000).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
Supplemental Tables 38-1,  
38-2  
NCES 98–062,  
NCES 2000–013



## Student Participation in Distance Education

**Table 38-1** Percentage of undergraduates who participated in distance education classes at postsecondary institutions, by type of institution and selected student characteristics: 1999–2000

Selected student characteristics	Total	2-year public	4-year		
			Total	Public	Private not-for-profit
Total	7.6	9.0	6.6	6.9	6.1
Sex					
Male	6.6	7.2	6.1	6.1	6.2
Female	8.7	10.4	7.1	7.5	6.0
Age					
24 or less	6.3	7.8	5.3	5.7	4.4
More than 24	10.2	10.2	10.3	10.3	10.2
Attendance status					
Full-time	6.9	9.8	5.6	6.0	5.0
Part-time	8.8	8.7	9.0	8.9	9.4
Student role					
Students who do not work	6.1	8.3	4.7	5.1	3.8
Students who work	7.5	9.4	6.3	6.7	5.3
Employees who study	9.5	9.2	10.3	10.2	10.4
Hours per week worked					
Less than 20	5.9	8.2	4.8	5.1	4.1
20 or more	8.8	9.3	8.2	8.2	8.2
Distance from home*					
30 miles or less	7.7	8.7	6.1	6.4	5.2
More than 30 miles	8.2	11.6	7.3	7.5	6.8

\*The distance between the student's home and the institution at which the student was primarily enrolled, not necessarily the distance between the student's home and the location of the distance education class.

NOTE: Includes students who participated in distance education at either the institution at which they were enrolled or both the institution at which they were enrolled and another institution. Students who participated in distance education only at an institution other than the one at which they were primarily enrolled were excluded. Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:2000).

## Student Participation in Distance Education

**Table 38-2** Percentage of master's students who participated in distance education classes at postsecondary institutions, and percentage of participants with various experiences with distance education: 1999–2000

Distance education characteristics	Total	Education master's degree	MBA	Other master's degree
Total percentage participating <sup>1</sup>	12.3	13.8	10.6	12.1
Percentage of participants <sup>2</sup>				
Type of distance education <sup>3</sup>				
Live TV/audio	44.9	50.5	35.4	44.6
Prerecorded audio/TV	29.3	27.1	28.3	31.1
Internet	68.3	56.0	77.1	73.5
Entire program available through distance education	38.1	29.6	41.4	43.0
Level of satisfaction with distance education classes compared with regular classes				
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
More satisfied	21.4	20.0	14.0	25.0
Equally satisfied	51.3	60.2	52.7	44.7
Less satisfied	27.3	19.8	33.3	30.3

<sup>1</sup>Based on total master's population.

<sup>2</sup>The rows below based on the number of master's students who participated in distance education classes.

<sup>3</sup>Type of distance education categories are not mutually exclusive.

NOTE: Includes students who participated in distance education at either the institution at which they were enrolled or both the institution at which they were enrolled and another institution. Students who participated in distance education only at an institution other than the one at which they were primarily enrolled were excluded. Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:2000).

# Student Participation in Distance Education

Table S38 Standard errors for the percentage of undergraduates who participated in distance education classes at postsecondary institutions, and percentage of participants with various experiences with distance education: 1999–2000

Distance education characteristics	Total	2-year public	4-year		
			Total	Public	Private not-for-profit
Total percentage participating	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.5
Percentage of participants					
Type of distance education					
Live TV/audio	1.5	2.6	1.7	2.0	3.0
Prerecorded audio/TV	1.7	3.1	1.7	2.0	2.8
Internet	1.6	2.9	1.6	2.0	2.5
Entire program available through distance education	1.2	2.0	1.7	2.1	2.8
Level of satisfaction with distance education classes compared with regular classes					
Total	(†)	(†)	(†)	(†)	(†)
More satisfied	1.1	1.8	1.5	1.9	2.1
Equally satisfied	1.4	2.5	1.6	2.0	2.6
Less satisfied	1.2	2.0	1.5	2.0	1.9

†Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:2000).

## Student Participation in Distance Education

**Table S38-1** Standard errors for the percentage of undergraduates who participated in distance education classes at postsecondary institutions, by type of institution and selected student characteristics: 1999–2000

Selected student characteristics	Total	2-year public	4-year		
			Total	Public	Private not-for-profit
Total	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.5
Sex					
Male	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.7
Female	0.4	0.7	0.4	0.5	0.6
Age					
24 or less	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.3	0.4
More than 24	0.6	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.1
Attendance status					
Full-time	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.4
Part-time	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	1.0
Student role					
Students who do not work	0.5	1.0	0.4	0.5	0.7
Students who work	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.5
Employees who study	0.6	0.8	0.9	1.2	1.2
Hours per week worked					
Less than 20	0.4	0.9	0.3	0.4	0.5
20 or more	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.7
Distance from home					
30 miles or less	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.7
More than 30 miles	0.5	1.6	0.4	0.6	0.6

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:2000).

**Table S38-2** Standard errors for the percentage of master's students who participated in distance education classes at postsecondary institutions, and percentage of participants with various experiences with distance education: 1999–2000

Distance education characteristics	Total	Education master's degree	MBA	Other master's degree
Total percentage participating	0.7	1.1	1.6	0.9
Percentage of participants				
Type of distance education				
Live TV/audio	2.0	3.9	5.1	2.4
Prerecorded audio/TV	1.9	3.1	5.8	2.5
Internet	2.4	4.0	4.2	2.6
Entire program available through distance education	2.2	3.5	6.6	2.6
Level of satisfaction with distance education classes compared with regular classes				
Total	(†)	(†)	(†)	(†)
More satisfied	1.7	2.4	3.0	2.4
Equally satisfied	2.0	3.3	5.4	2.9
Less satisfied	1.7	2.2	5.7	2.4

†Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, NCES. National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:2000).